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The area to which this group of teachers will be sent is characterized by its large influx of poor Negro families with poor cultural backgrounds. Some of the problems of this area will require a broad-scale, carefully analyzed, and planned attack within and by public schools. Every school has a hidden or subliminal curriculum which teaches, in addition to reading and arithmetic, social behavior, goals and values. Teachers serve as models for imitation and identification, and each student is pressed to conform to the school way-of-life. Student leadership often expresses itself in ways counter to the educational process. Therefore it is necessary to understand the culture of the youngsters and thence to devise more effective techniques for coping with that behavior in the classroom. Because of the pressure of the Northern urban environment, Negroes have ceased to initiate or to assert themselves constructively. Therefore, open enrollment plans for improved integration of schools will not work for those who need it most. These challenges speak of a need to examine every facet of the overt and subliminal curriculum of teachers, principals, counselors, and supervisors.					
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Speech to faculty of Harvard-Boston Summer Program at Pre-planning Meetings

March 4, 1965

by

Harold Haizlip

I want to make a few general remarks before I comment on the kinds of children I think you will be dealing with (with generalizations about them for which I apologize). It's necessary first to understand the Harvard-Boston Program in terms of what has been happening in Boston and in many other cities around the country in the last few years. The Boston public schools began participating a few years ago in the city's attempt to devise new curriculum methods and new programs specifically geared for deprived area children. Primarily, these were efforts by those within the system. It was not until ABCD, Action for Boston Community Development, came along in 1961 and early 1962 that the school system began one of the most significant changes in its history. ABCD, with funds from the Ford Foundation, the President's Committee, the Office of Man Power Automation and Training, and so on - a rather impressive array of financial benefactors - began working with the Boston School Department, particularly with the superintendent, the Board of Superintendents, and some of the principals and supervisors to develop programs for youngsters in deprived areas. (The most important areas at that time were Roxbury, the South End and Charlestown, Roxbury having the heaviest concentration of negroes in the city, including parts of Dorchester and Jamaica Plain.) The significance of the decision to begin a joint venture lies in the fact that the School Department opened its doors to external thinking about what ought to be considered in the development of curriculum.

Harvard-Boston comes as a part of the opening of those doors. This impetus to change is significant and it defines for Harvard the additional responsibility of helping Boston not only to improve its educational methods, that is, through team teaching, but to help redefine the entire educational process. To accomplish this it is necessary to look into the home environment in order to understand the special problems that kids from deprived areas bring to the school setting.

In recent years, as most of you know, Boston, like other school systems, has begun to look at indices normally not considered in thinking about the kind of curriculum that is necessary for students. The School Department has been thinking about the income of the families from which the pupils come. It has been thinking about the effects of the racial group or the minority group to which they belong, and the effect of these on attitudes and on the potential accomplishments of educators with the youngsters. And the School Department has begun thinking about many other aspects of a youngster's growth and development which heretofore have not been taken into serious consideration.

I feel I ought to talk primarily about the neighborhood from which these youngsters come, the kinds of problems which are rampant in the neighborhood (on the assumption that you are going into the Kennedy school), and what I think are some of the implications of these problems for you, because not only must you discuss and perfect the method which you want to apply, but also because the method will be no more successful than is your ability to understand all the factors which define the children in the Program and which define the problems you will encounter.

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You are going into Jamaica Plain, a section of Boston which can be aptly described as a prime residential area that has seen better days. Presently, the district comprises great extremes in socio-economic conditions. Poverty in Jamaica Plain is now a significant phenomenon, requiring comprehensive planning and programs. Cultural poverty, evidenced among a growing segment of the population, is reflected in apathy, ill health, general discouragement, under-achievement in schools, and emotional disturbance. Among the impoverished population, research data confirms other measurable phenomena. There are lower incomes, there are more households headed by females, there are larger families, there are greater concentrations of the elderly, there are high rates of juvenile delinquency, there are high rates of public assistance, there are high rates of draft rejections, and there are disproportionate rates of both unemployment and under-employment.

The poor in Jamaica Plain are not concentrated within neatly delineated neighborhoods. They can be found within declining old neighborhoods, in transitional areas of social and racial change, in physically deteriorating areas along railroad tracks, and in public housing projects.

Of the total population of some 41,606 people comprising roughly 10,000 families, some 19.4% of the residents in Jamaica Plain are subsisting on incomes of less than \$3000. Over one thousand families with children under 18 fall into this category. In other delineated poverty areas the statistics are more revealing. In the Bromley-Heath Housing Project, from which you plan to draw heavily, the medium income of all families stands at \$2269. Breaking down this figure further, over 70% of the elderly families in the project are subsisting on incomes of less than \$2000 a year.

Public assistance figures for Jamaica Plain also reveal the prevalence of poverty. Some 952 families, or nearly 10% of all families in Jamaica Plain, receive aid to families with dependent children. This figure has increased 64% in the last four year period. Over 90% of all families under \$3000 receive AFDC payments. Translated into number of children supported, this means that there are some 2619 children receiving AFDC payments. Similarly, public assistance to the elderly constitutes an important index of poverty and dependence. Old age assistance accounts for 40% of the total welfare cases in the district. Another sizeable group of the elderly is receiving medical assistance to the aged.

According to the 1960 census, 16½% of the housing in Jamaica Plain is deteriorating. Housing is widely distributed in isolated pockets, with much of it extending along the railroad tracks north of Center Street. The percentage of renter-occupied housing in Jamaica Plain is high, running over 70%. Multi-family dwellings are numerous in these areas.

Some 4.4% of the district is currently unemployed, and 43.5 of the labor force is comprised of families and unrelated individuals with incomes under \$3000. The problem of unemployment becomes even more pressing when viewed by neighborhoods, for here the relevance of general poverty and its problems to unemployment can be seen quite clearly. Among multi-problem families in public housing, for example, unemployment among males between the ages of 18 and 25 rises to a peak of some 16%.

Related to these problems, the delinquency rate, as measured by annual commitments to the Youth Service Board, is high in Jamaica Plain, exceeded only by the South End, a section that some of you may have read about in a recent edition of The New Republic. In Jamaica Plain, 4.8% of every thousand children between the ages of 7 and 17 are committed to the Youth Service Board for some form of juvenile delinquency. In Boston as a whole this percentage is only 2.3, and in South Boston it is only 2.5. Among the district's population over 25 it is to be noted that 14.8% of the white population, and another 20.3% of the non-white has completed less than eight years of formal education.

Finally, the racial character of Jamaica Plain is undergoing rapid, very rapid, transition. There has been a 500% increase in the non-white population between the period 1950-1960.

These are, I think, some of the relevant statistics about Jamaica Plain. The community itself is changing, unemployment is high, there is a concentration of distended, extended, one-parent families, and all of this combines to form the attitudes of the youngsters - attitudes of a very particular sort.

I'd like to summarize briefly some of the statistics about this area. In the Bromley Project some 56% of the families more than half, have less than \$3000 income per year and 79% are under \$4000. Families with seven or more children represent 13% of the population. Families with 4 or more children, some 43%. Of the total community, 62% is on aid, with 11% receiving Old Age Assistance and 20% Aid to Families with Dependent Children. Area occupancy by non-whites has increased from 28% in 1962 to 38% in 1964.

Some of these problems can be alleviated, if not cured, by urban renewal and other social action programs. Others will require concomitantly a broad-scale, carefully analyzed and planned attack within and by the public schools. It is clear that youngsters whose families are severely handicapped by low incomes, unemployment, health problems, the effects of racial concentration in what I call the negro compound, and by extended and disjointed family life present very special problems to educators in the public schools. Harvard-Boston is moving into a community and into a school system vastly different from Lexington. Vastly different.

I'd like to discuss one way in which these factors I have so briefly described are manifested among youngsters. Bill Kvaraceus was one of the first people to identify the subliminal or hidden curriculum in the schools. There is in every school a hidden or subliminal curriculum which teaches in addition to reading and arithmetic, how to get along with one's fellow man and how to think about and evaluate one's self and others. Individuals with a school serve as models for imitation and identification and each student is pressed to conform to the kinds of attitudes, beliefs, mores and behavior which surround him. The areas and styles of conforming, of competing, of rebelling, of cooperating are part of the hidden curriculum. Each individual, however, has both constructive and destructive potentials available for development. Which potentials are reinforced into predominance depends upon interaction with the environment. In their struggle to become accepted, protected, and a part of the school group in which they find themselves, pupils in these areas may find learning from peers to be far more practical than learning subject matter for seemingly distant future application. They have but to look around themselves, at their fathers unemployed, at their mothers as the sole support of the family, at their brothers,

unable to get jobs and perhaps unable to be admitted into college, at their sisters, and at their friends. They have but to look at these people to be reinforced in this point of view. Therefore, disobedience and competitive mischief-making which characterize slum area schools, may be required to secure safety and respect from peers in all situations where pupil leadership is strong in these directions. Moreover, support, both tacit and overt, is very often found at home. What students learn from their interaction with peers may be in direct conflict with the instruction and training of their teachers, and may indeed sabotage the planned educational process. While the teacher is designated as the leader of the class, there are times when students experience leadership roles either for cliques within the class or for the entire class. The leadership provided by students may be in support of the teacher or it may run directly counter to the teacher's efforts.

My reason for focusing on this is that in most deprived areas there is an insistence to establish discipline, to clamp down on our students, to have them rigidly marching from one room to the next. This is a pre-requisite for any kind of teaching - very often it becomes a substitute. I think it is necessary to understand the culture of the youngsters, what prompts the kind of behavior they manifest individually and in groups, and thence to devise more effective techniques than over-emphasized discipline as a means of coping with that behavior in the classrooms.

Finally I want to talk about the Negro compound because with the Negro students you will encounter and must understand a very different kind of behavior from that which was experienced in Lexington. The Negro Ghetto, and its accompanying predominantly Negro neighborhood schools, can most easily be seen as an agent which has adverse effects upon self-esteem, value systems, motivations, aspirations, and the behavior of the pupils. Such adverse effects can seriously impair the educational process. Although the gate of the compound in northern cities very often is (or is said to be) open, few find it and even fewer use it. Many Negroes have been so trained not to reach out that they fail consistently at just those points where constructive changes are possible. Most do not believe that the gate is open, even when told and offered encouragement to walk through. Some who believe have so renounced any capacity to initiate or constructively assert themselves that they are immobilized and completely apathetic. It is for these reasons, as well as for economic ones, that open enrollment plans for improved integration of schools on an optimal basis will not work for these who need it most. It is also unrealistic to leave the burden of change upon the Negro parents when basically the American Negro family has been disrupted and made impotent as a source of initiative in purposeful action.

The challenges which these problems present to the school are clear. What is needed is not sympathy, it is not pity, it is not tears. What is needed is a more pressing and penetrating examination of every facet of the overt and the subliminal curriculum than has ever before characterized the educational process or its agents - its teachers, its principals, its supervisors, its counselors, and so on. The Harvard-Boston Summer Program is promising in this regard because what has been expressed here and in the literature is an intent to examine not only these factors but also the methods to be employed with these youngsters! I don't feel safe in making other generalizations about these youngsters, but I do want to add a remark based on some of the data gathered on Boston schools in areas like that into which Harvard-Boston is going. Most of the objective testing programs in the Boston schools indicate that there is a trend of successive under-achievement. The school readiness tests for the city

as a whole and for those areas which have been designated as deprived areas indicate that there is no significant difference. This may be a function of what is measured and how it is measured, but it is nevertheless clear that by the time youngsters from Roxbury, the South End, Charlestown, and areas of Jamaica Plain have reached the third grade they average six months below the city-wide average. By the time they reach the sixth grade, they average a year-and-a-half to two years below the city-wide average in reading and in mathematics. What makes this a most telling statistic is the fact that the city-wide average itself is below grade level.

There are other indices of the creeping effect of successive failure. The dropout rate is significantly high and delinquency is extremely high. The Harvard-Boston Program represents one more effort to analyze the variables I've described and to analyze yourselves as agents of the public schools in order to effect a significantly improved program in Boston. I hope it comes true.